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RUEHZM/GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL COLLECTIVE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KUWAIT 000915

SIPDIS

STATE FOR NEA/ARP, S/CT KURSCH

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TAGS: [PTER](#) [ENRG](#) [PREL](#) [PINS](#) [KCIP](#) [ECON](#) [KU](#)
SUBJECT: KUWAIT CONTINUING TO MOVE FORWARD ON CRITICAL
INFRASTRUCTURE PROTECTION

REF: A. 8/31/09 KURSCH-JOHN E-MAIL

[1](#)B. KUWAIT 624

[1](#)C. KUWAIT 541

Classified By: Economic Counselor Oliver B. John for reasons 1.4 (b & d
) .

[1](#)1. (C) Summary and Key Points:

-- Kuwait continues to take action to improve oil facility
security with the assistance of European and U.S. consultants.

-- The Oil Sector Services Company (OSSC) has approximately
1,300 security personnel, almost all Kuwaitis and is putting
together an 80-team strong canine unit trained by a U.S.
company.

-- OSSC will be taking over screening duties at one of the
oil refineries shortly, with the goal of taking over the
screening at all facilities. End Summary and key points.

[1](#)2. (SBU) Econcouns and Econoff called on Ali Ahmed Al-Obaid,
the Acting Chairman and Managing Director of the Oil Sector
Services Company (OSSC), and Deputy for Kuwait's High
Coordination Committee for Protecting Critical Energy
Infrastructure at his diwaniya on September 4. Al-Obaid
explained that his company (a wholly owned subsidiary of the
Kuwait Petroleum Corporation) was set up to provide all sorts
of oil sector services, but were focused almost exclusively
on security. Of 1,700 employees, 400 are fire fighters, the
rest are security officials. He noted proudly that "95-98
percent are Kuwaitis."

[1](#)3. (SBU) Al-Obaid and Econcouns briefly outlined the status
of discussions with regard to the Critical Energy
Infrastructure Memorandum of Understanding and the status of
Kuwait's actions to remediate problems found in the 2007
assessment visit. Al-Obaid asserted that the Kuwaitis were
"about 80%" finished with the required security upgrades.
They have procured improved fencing for the refinery
facilities and have installed new cameras. He noted that he
expects to put out a tender for a new strengthened main gate
shortly. The design has been done and an original tender was
issued, but the initial proposals were exorbitant, so the
Kuwaitis will re-tender. Finally, he noted that he has a new
command and control center under design, but does not want to
put it through the general tender process, due to the
sensitive nature of the equipment involved.

[1](#)4. (SBU) Al-Obaid explained that the Kuwaitis were using
European consultants to help design and upgrade their
installation protection, adding that they were using U.S.
firms and U.S. equipment to implement the recommendations.
He introduced econoffs to members of the company -- U.S. K-9
Unlimited -- who are training his explosive detection dog
teams. Al-Obaid is building 80 teams of dogs and handlers.

He noted that he currently has five trained Kuwaiti dog handlers and is training an additional 20. The rest of the dog handlers are third country nationals (largely Filipinos).

15. (C) Al-Obaid explained that the OSSC was responsible for security inside the perimeter fences for the refineries, while Kuwait's Ministry of Interior was responsible for external perimeter security. He utilizes his own mobile units to patrol the oil fields. His guards are unarmed, however he would like them to be able to obtain weapons for "self defense" (i.e., side arms), but is not interested in pushing for a heavily armed security force. This would only cause conflict with Kuwait's Ministry of Interior and Defense. In his view, OSSC security officials could work like U.S. TSA inspectors with police back up. To that end, he has trained a team of 125 OSSC security officials as screeners. After protracted negotiations, they will take over the screening at one of the facilities on "an experimental basis," eventually expanding to provide screening at all the facilities. Ministry of Interior personnel will remain to provide armed back up, but the screening will be conducted by the OSSC. In the long run, he would like to expand to become the TSA of Kuwait. As an aside, Al-Obaid mentioned a visit he took to the United States to look at refinery security, which in his opinion, was woefully inadequate.

16. (C) With regard to interagency cooperation, Al-Obaid noted that coordination with the police and with the coast guard had certainly improved. He appeared less positive about the National Security Bureau's role in overall coordination although he was careful not to appear critical.

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17. (C) Comment: According to our Kuwaiti contacts, they continue to take actions to respond to concerns raised in the May 2007 CEIP assessment. However absent any USG-GoK MOU, we have less of a window on their thinking and less ability to help shape their efforts in ways that work to both our benefit. With the slow progress on bilateral cooperation in this area, the Kuwaitis are perfectly happy looking elsewhere for assistance, as their contacts with NATO demonstrate (ref a). Depending on the outcome of the upcoming NATO CEIP assessment, we may have an additional window to try and move engagement forward. End Comment.

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